requirement of the laboratories/establishments. The current target of filling up of 750 such posts during the calendar year 2002 is in hand. The other authorized posts will be filled up during the 10th plan period in phases according to requirement.

Naval bases demanded by US on Western Coast

3069. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the US Government has sought three Naval Bases on Western Coast of India for its warships to anchor and use it for refilling etc.;

(b) if so, the names of three ports where these facilities have been sought by the US Government; and

(c) what is the response of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) However, Government has received specific requests for assistance in connection with operation Enduring Freedom from certain friendly countries, including the United States. Those requests that conform to our existing policy guidelines for overflights and refueling of aircraft and port calls by Naval ships have been approved.

Drawing lessons from US Military tactics in Afghanistan

3070. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any specific study has been undertaken to identify the recent US Military tactics in handling the air operations and the ground warfare in Afghanistan to draw lessons for meeting challenges on our own border more effectively; and

(b) if so, the broad distinctive features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A Study Group has been instituted by the Air Headquarters for detailed examination and analysis of the planning and execution of the air operations in Afghanistan. Since the operations are on-going, the Study Group is likely to take time in completing their study.